

App. No. 10/688,618
Office Action Dated August 3, 2004

REMARKS

Favorable reconsideration of this application is requested in view of the following remarks.

The present application claims priority to JP 2002-303183, filed October 17, 2002.

Claims 1-3 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Hokkirigawa (EP 1 344 791), however, the publication date of Hokkirigawa is 9/17/2003 which is not more than 1 year before the present filing date of 10/17/2003. At best, the rejection should be based on 35 U.S.C. 102(a). Even so, this rejection is moot per the enclosed verified translation of the priority application, as the October 17, 2002 priority date predates the publication date of the reference.

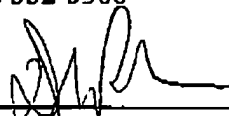
In view of the above, favorable reconsideration in the form of a notice of allowance is requested. Any questions regarding this communication can be directed to the undersigned attorney, Douglas P. Mueller, Reg. No. 30,300, at (612)371-5237.

Respectfully submitted,



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Dated: October 26, 2004

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DPM:mfe